

NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE

DIVERSITY PLAN

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## PREFACE

The National Ocean Service (NOS) Diversity Plan was prepared to incorporate the current NOAA managing diversity framework as published in the NOAA Diversity Plan, signed January 23, 1997 by Dr. D. James Baker. The NOAA Plan was subsequently updated April 1998. The NOS Diversity Plan will be revised annually. Action items will also be included in the Annual Operating Plan.

Comments or questions are encouraged and should be directed to Ruth Moore, NOS Diversity Liaison, MB3, SSMC4, Station 13108 or to Ruth Moore@NOAA.gov. Ms. Moore can also be reached at (301) 713-3050.

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

NOS is committed to its mission:

To advance the sustainable use of the coast to support the nation's economic prosperity and environmental well being.

In order to accomplish this mission, the NOS workforce interacts with a diverse population and myriad diversity factors both internally and externally. Our work externally brings us in constant contact with our constituents, customers, the Congress, state and local governments and others. Internally, we work together as co-workers, work teams, in supervisor and employee relationships, and are often customers of each other for products and services. Both internally and externally, we use a variety of systems, policies, and practices which comprise the cultures in which we operate. To work effectively within these varied cultures, we as a diverse workforce, must share a common understanding and awareness of managing diversity and use all of our resources to maximize our effectiveness. As we work to improve our systems, we will incorporate and interweave diversity initiatives into this framework.

I join Dr. Baker as a champion of diversity. I am committed to having a workforce of individuals working at their greatest potential whose collective talents and experiences provide synergy to ensure the success of the NOS mission. However, it is not enough for me to be a champion alone. I challenge all of you to join with Dr. Baker and me to become champions of diversity in order for NOS to continue to be true to its mission and remain a viable organization in which to work.

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Nancy Foster, Ph.D.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Direction for Managing Diversity

Upon issuance of its diversity plan in January 1997, NOAA launched a new direction for managing diversity which provided consistency throughout NOAA in its implementation. The NOS Diversity Plan has been prepared to accommodate the action items in the NOAA Plan, but also addresses actions which are specific to NOS. The NOS Plan is a stand alone document and is not a reiteration of the NOAA Plan. It fits within the framework of the NOAA Diversity Plan which establishes definitions and overall goals. Understanding the NOAA Plan is essential.

### 1.2 Commitment to Diversity

NOS has been involved in diversity initiatives over the past several years which is an indication of its commitment to maintaining a workforce and a work environment that is conducive to maximizing the potential of its employees. NOS has been proactive in training its employees in managing diversity; has provided resources to enlighten the public and potential job candidates about the NOS and NOAA missions; has participated in programs that resolve conflict; and has implemented programs to improve the quality of work life for our workforce. The areas where NOS expects to see benefits from its efforts include the following:

- \*Increase the diversity of our workforce
- \*Enhance productivity
- \*Keep pace with technological change
- \*Expand options for problem solving
- \*Improve communication at all levels
- \*Improve our image in Congress and society
- \*Broaden potential applicant pool
- \*Encourage full commitment from all employees
- \*Maximize the effectiveness of our operations
- \*Utilize our human resources more effectively

### 1.3 Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and the Affirmative Employment Program (AE)

The pursuit of managing diversity efforts will in no way change our commitment to EEO and AE. It is important to realize that there is a difference between EEO, AE, and managing diversity. It is also important that the workforce understands these differences. Definitions of these three terms are in the NOAA Diversity Plan and should be studied carefully. These three areas are distinctly different, yet are intertwined and dependent on the other. Through EEO and AE, we work to ensure the equal rights of all of our workforce and to provide an avenue for addressing EEO and AE

issues. On the other hand, the NOS managing diversity initiative strives to improve the quality of work life for all employees and provide systems that support the diverse factors in the workplace.

## 2.0 NOS DIVERSITY PLAN

The NOS Diversity Plan provides specific action items to accomplish it's managing diversity goals as well as to support the NOAA diversity effort.

### 2.1 Advocacy

Advocacy is the first phase in initiating a managing diversity process. It involves the creation of a more educated workforce in the area of managing diversity. The workforce becomes more cognizant of organizational culture and the business case for managing diversity.

Over the last year, over 80% of the NOS workforce has participated in basic awareness diversity training which focused on understanding differences and organizational culture. This educational process will continue as reflected in the following action items.

#### Actions:

(1) Educate the NOS workforce on the managing diversity initiative through organizational and work group meetings and presentations, and participation in managing diversity workshops sponsored by the NOAA Diversity Council.

(2) Educate the NOS network members through various NOAA Diversity Council sponsored workshops and classes, as well as interaction with other network members.

(3) Identify and provide resources to the NOAA Diversity Council for various subcommittees.

(4) Support managing diversity efforts in NOS Program and Staff Offices through the NOS diversity network. This network will also be used to ensure that information about managing diversity is distributed throughout the organization and that consultants in the NOS network continually work within their organizations to imbue managing diversity principles in daily operations.

(5) Develop and maintain an NOS Diversity web page which is linked to the NOAA Diversity web page in order to communicate current activities, ideas, information on internal diversity liaisons and consultants, the NOS Diversity Plan, and other pertinent information.

Time frame: FY98 - 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters

Responsible Officials: NOS Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA), Diversity Liaisons and Consultants, and NOS Program and Staff Office Directors

Partners: Unions, the EEO Manager

## 2.2 Organizational Assessment

This is the second phase of initiating a managing diversity process. NOS will follow the lead of NOAA in this phase.

### Actions:

(1) Participate in the development of the NOAA-wide organizational assessment initiative through team membership.

(2) Coordinate the organizational assessment phase within NOS.

(3) Encourage total workforce participation in and commitment to the organizational assessment.

(4) Provide necessary resources for the survey feedback action process.

Time frame: FY98 - 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters

Responsible Officials: DAA, Program and Staff Office Directors, and Diversity Liaisons Consultants, and other designated individuals

Partners: Unions and the EEO Manager

## 2.3 Fostering Diversity in the NOS Workforce: Quality of Work life

NOS strives to provide the best working conditions for its employees and keeps abreast of opportunities to maintain a safe and healthy work environment. NOS also participates in flexible and supportive systems such as flexiplace and alternative work schedules to accommodate the varied needs of the workforce.

### Actions:

(1) Support the NOAA Diversity Council in its efforts to improve quality of work life for all employees. Identify where improvements are needed in work/family balance issues such as dual career and non-traditional families, child care, elder care, aging workforce, etc.

(2) Implement quality of work life initiatives that are identified by the NOAA Diversity Council that are relevant to the NOS workforce.

Time frame: On going.

Responsible Officials: DAA, Program and Staff Office Directors, Diversity Liaisons and Consultants, NOS workforce

Partners: Unions, EEO Officer, Employee Groups

#### 2.4 Developing the NOS Workforce for the 21st Century and Promoting Career Interests

NOS is committed to developing and maintaining a workforce that is utilized to its fullest potential to accomplish the NOS mission.

##### Actions:

(1) Develop and implement programs to help the workforce maximize their contributions toward the NOS mission.

(2) Ensure that managers are informing their employees about the Career Enhancement Plan process. Encourage employees to use the Career Enhancement Plan process. Provide managers training in how to fully utilize this process to help employees take charge of their career development. Provide training for employees to enhance their understanding of the value of developing a Career Enhancement Plan for short and long range goals.

(3) Develop and implement a Rotational Assignment Program as an additional opportunity for employees to develop their skills in the context of the actual job, with an individual who has an accomplished skill. Encourage managers to actively participate in this process by providing meaningful experiences to help employees broaden their skills.

(4) Develop and implement a Mentoring Program to assist employees in understanding how to personally improve their skills and to gain a focused approach to achieving their goals. Ensure that the model reflects the diversity of NOS.

(5) Provide creative developmental and training opportunities for the workforce to maintain state-of-the-art knowledge in all mission related fields and emerging technology.

(6) Work with the Diversity Council to identify and improve existing NOAA-wide systems such as performance/reward, selection, promotion, etc.

(7) Work with the NOS Human Resource Management Division to provide training in human resource areas that managers encounter daily.



Time frame: FY 97 - 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters

Responsible Officials: DAA, Program and Staff Office Directors, Diversity Liaisons and Consultants, NOS workforce, and the NOS Human Resources Division

Partners: Unions, the EEO Manager

## 2.5 Developing NOS' Potential Workforce for the 21st Century and Promoting Career Interest

### Actions:

(1) Utilize available opportunities to promote the image and mission of NOAA and NOS to enhance our chances of attracting quality employees.

(2) Work with community organizations and schools in the capacity of judges for science fairs, tutoring, and other activities to promote awareness of NOS programs.

(3) Provide resources for exhibiting at conferences, workshops, professional society meetings, etc. When possible, these will be scheduled in conjunction with other business trips.

(4) Participate in summer intern programs for high school and college students to provide on-the-job experience.

Time frame: Immediate and ongoing

Responsible Officials: DAA, Program and Staff Office Directors, NOS Workforce, Diversity Liaisons and Consultants.

Partners: Unions and the EEO Manager

## 3.0 MEASURES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

This initiative requires an analysis of the data collected in the organizational assessment phase to determine where improvements are needed. Measures and accountability strategies will then be developed.

Action: To be determined

## 4.0 PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to NOAA support organizations that provide services to NOS, our internal partners will include all management levels, the NOS workforce, unions, the EEO Officer, and diversity liaisons and consultants.

## 5.0 RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

NOS will provide the necessary resources for internal and, where applicable, NOAA-wide diversity initiatives. An average of 2 FTEs will be necessary to support the NOAA managing diversity initiative and to implement and manage diversity related programs within NOS. This average was obtained by combining the estimated percentage of time spent by each NOS employee who is formally involved in managing diversity activities. An estimate of \$3000 will be spent in promoting career interest to our future potential workforce. Resources will be provided for training for the Career Enhancement Plan process, implementation of the Rotational Assignment Program and development and implementation of the Mentoring Program. Work with community schools will be done on a voluntary basis.

## 6.0 NOAA DIVERSITY COUNCIL

The NOS Deputy Assistant Administrator is the NOS management representative to the Diversity Council. Two unions, Local 2703 and Local 2640, representing a segment of NOS employees have representation on the Council. Currently, one at-large member is an NOS employee.

MANAGING DIVERSITY COST ESTIMATE  
FY 98

Estimate of Time Spent by NOS Employees on Diversity Initiatives

|                                    |                         |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Deputy Assistant Administrator     | 10%                     |
| Program and Staff Office Directors | 05%                     |
| NOS Diversity Liaison              | 50%                     |
| NOS Internal Diversity Liaisons    | 10% times 5 individuals |
| NOS Diversity Consultants          | 10% times 5 individuals |
| NOS EEO Manager                    | 05%                     |

Providing a representative at conferences, workshops, professional society meetings - \$3,000 (6 trips at \$500 each)

Training managers and employees on the Career Enhancement Plan process.

Developing and Implementing a Mentoring Program

Developing and Implementing a Rotational Assignment Program